

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ADDIS 02122 110956Z
ACTION SS-25

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-----068861 111003Z /17

P 110923Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8347
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 2122

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, ET, US
SUBJ: ETHIO-US BILATERAL RELATIONS; HANDLING NEWS OF MILITARY
SALES TO SOMALIA AND POSSIBLE CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE AND
ACTION ON DENYING AID TO ETHIOPIA

REF: A) STATE 114652, B) STATE 116019, C) ADDIS ABABA 2113

1. IN LIGHT OF FAVORABLE NEW SIGNAL IN FORM OF AGREEMENT,
WE ARE ALL THE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW TO HANDLE NEWS
WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY SURFACE, AND APPARENTLY SOON, ON
DECISION TO CONSULT WITH CONGRESS ON FMS CREDIT AND CASH
SALES TO SOMALIA. AS DEP IS AWARE, THERE IS NO WAY TO
MAKE DECISION TO PROVIDE ANY KIND OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT --
LETHAL OR NON-LETHAL, DEFENSIVE OR OFFENSIVE -- PALATABLE
TO THIS COUNTRY. EVEN MORE THAN KENYA, ETHIOPIA WILL SEE
ANY SUCH DECISION AS HOSTILE ONE, BUT THIS IS EVEN MORE SO
SINCE IT IS COMMONLY KNOWN HERE THAT FIGHTING WITH SOMALI
REGULARS INSIDE ETHIOPIA CONTINUES. THIS IS NOT RPT NOT
TO MAKE PLEA AGAINST DECISION BASED ON WHAT MUST BE OVER-
RIDING US INTERESTS, ONLY HTAT WE FIND BEST WAY TO LIMIT
DAMAGE.

2. MY SUGGESTION IS THAT I BE AUTHORIZED AT APPROPRIATE
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MOMENT TO INFORM MOFA AMERICAS DIVISION HEAD BERHANE
DERESSE WITH REQUEST FOR HIS ADVICE ON WHETHER I SHOULD
PERSONALLY CARRY MESSAGE TO FOREIGN MINISTER FELLEKE OR
EVEN POSSIBLY PMAC MEMBER IN CHARGE OF FOREIGN RELATIONS
BERHANU BAYEH. IF STORY IS HELD UNTIL SSOD STARTS MAY
23 IN NEW YORK, THEN IT WOULD BE EVEN BETTER IF SECRETARY
OR OTHER HIGH-RANKING US OFFICIAL WOULD BROACH SUBJECT

FRANKLY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FELLEKE. (REFTEL C REPORTS HIS ATTENDANCE.) WORST WAY WOULD BE FOR PMGSE TO LEARN ABOUT IT FIRST FROM MEDIA.

3. OR EVEN GREATER CONCERN TO POST AT THIS MOMENT IS NEWS BROUGHT BY AID AFR/EA DIRECTOR JOHNSON, HINTED AT BY REFTEL (B) THAT AMENDMENT MAY BE INTRODUCED IN SENATE OR HOUSE THIS WEEK TO DENY AID TO ETHIOPIA A LA MOZAMBIQUE AND UGANDA. DEBATE IN ITSELF MIGHT POSSIBLY BE HEALTHY, PARTICULARLY IF IT IS ALSO PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT ADMINISTRATION TAKES A STRONG STAND AGAINST IT. HOWEVER, PASSAGE WOULD CERTAINLY BODE TROUBLE FOR RECEPTION IN ADDIS OF NEWLY-APPOINTED AMBASSADOR.
MATHERON

SECRET

NNN

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